

## Heart Attack Warning Signs

A heart attack is a frightening event, and you probably don't want to think about it. But, if you learn the signs of a heart attack and what steps to take, you can save a life—maybe your own.

What are the signs of a heart attack? Many people think a heart attack is sudden and intense, like a "movie" heart attack, where a person clutches his or her chest and falls over.

The truth is that many heart attacks start slowly, as a mild pain or discomfort. If you feel such a symptom, you may not be sure what's wrong. Your symptoms may even come and go. Even those who have had a heart attack may not recognize their symptoms, because the next attack can have entirely different ones.

It's vital that everyone learn the **warning signs of a heart attack**. These are:

- **Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- **Shortness of breath.** Often comes along with chest discomfort. But it also can occur before chest discomfort.
- **Other symptoms.** May include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

Learn the signs—but also remember: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, you should still have it checked out. Fast action can save lives—maybe your own.

Source: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/actintime/>

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